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JUST BEFORE WINTER.

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A RICH tint of russet deepened on the Forest top and seemed to sink day by day deeper into the foliage like a stain; riper and riper it grew, as an apple colours. Broad acres these of the last crop, the crop of leaves; a thousand, thousand quarters, the broad earth will be their barn. A warm red lies on the hillside above the woods, as if the red dawn stayed there through the day; it is the heath and heather seeds; and higher still, a pale yellow fills the larches. The whole of the great hill glows with colour under the short hours of the October sun; and overhead, where the pine-cones hang, the sky is of the deepest azure. The conflagration of the woods burning luminously crowds into those short hours a brilliance the slow summer does not know.

The frosts and mists and battering rains that follow in quick succession after the equinox, the chill winds that creep about the fields, have ceased a little while, and there is a pleasant sound in the fir-trees. Everything is not gone yet. In the lanes that lead down to the 'shaws' in the dells, the 'gills,' as these wooded depths are called, buckler ferns, green, fresh, and elegantly fashioned, remain under the shelter of the hazel-lined banks. From the tops of the ash-wands, where the linnets so lately sang, coming up from the stubble, the darkened leaves have been blown, and their much-divided branches stand bare like outstretched fingers. Black-spotted sycamore leaves are down, but the moss grows thick and deeply green; and the trumpets of the lichen seem to be larger now they are moist, than when they were dry under the summer heat. Here is herb-Robert in flower—its leaves are scarlet; a leaf of St John's wort, too, has become scarlet; the bramble leaves are many shades of crimson; one plant of tormentil has turned yellow. Furze bushes, grown taller since the spring, bear a second bloom, but

not perhaps so golden as the first. It is the true furze, and not the lesser gorse; it is covered with half-opened buds; and it is clear, if the short hours of sun would but lengthen, the whole gorse hedge would become aglow again. Our trees, too, that roll up their buds so tightly, like a dragoon's cloak, would open them again at Christmas; and the sticky horse-chestnut would send forth its long ears of leaves for New-year's Day. They would all come out in leaf again if we had but a little more sun; they are quite ready for a second summer.

Brown lie the acorns, yellow where they were fixed in their cups; two of these cups seem almost as large as the great acorns from abroad. A red dead nettle, a mauve thistle, white and pink bramble-flowers, a white strawberry, a little yellow tormentil, a broad yellow dandelion, narrow hawkweeds, and blue scabious, are all in flower in the lane. Others are scattered on the mounds and in the meads adjoining, where may be collected some heath still in bloom, prunella, hypericum, white yarrow, some heads of red clover, some beautiful buttercups, three bits of blue veronica, wild chamomile, tall yellow weed, pink centaury, succory dock cress, daisies, fleabane, knapweed, and delicate blue harebells. Two York roses flower on the hedge: altogether, twenty-six flowers, a large bouquet for the 19th of October, gathered, too, in a hilly country.

Besides these, note the broad hedge-parsley leaves, tunnelled by leaf-miners; bright masses of haws gleaming in the sun; scarlet hips; great brown cones fallen from the spruce-firs; black heart-shaped bindweed leaves here, and buff bryony leaves yonder; green and scarlet berries of white bryony hanging thickly on vines from which the leaves have withered; and bunches of grass, half yellow and half green, along the mound. Now that the leaves have been brushed from the beech saplings, you may see how the leading stem rises in a curious wavy line; some of the leaves lie at the foot, washed in white dew, that stays in the shade all day; the wetness of the dew makes the brownish red

of the leaf show clear and bright. One leaf falls in the stillness of the air slowly, as if let down by a cord of gossamer gently, and not as a stone falls—fate delayed to the last. A moth adheres to a bough, his wings half open, like a short brown cloak flung over his shoulders. Pointed leaves, some drooping, some horizontal, some fluttering slightly, still stay on the tall willow-wands, like bannerets on the knights' lances, much torn in the late battle of the winds. There is a shower from a clear sky under the trees in the forest; brown acorns rattling as they fall, and rich coloured Spanish chestnuts thumping the sward, and sometimes striking you as you pass under; they lie on the ground in pocketfuls. Specks of brilliant scarlet dot the grass like some bright berries blown from the bushes; but on stooping to pick them, they are found to be the heads of a fungus. Near by lies a black magpie's feather, spotted with round dots of white.

At the edge of the trees stands an old timbered farmstead, whose gables and dark lines of wood have not been painted in the memory of man, dull and weather-beaten, but very homely; and by it rises the delicate cone of a new east-house, the tiles on which are of the brightest red. Lines of bluish smoke ascend from among the bracken of the wild open ground, where a tribe of gypsies have pitched their camp. Three of the vans are time-stained and travel-worn, with dull red roofs; the fourth is brightly picked out with fresh yellow paint, and stands a marked object at the side. Orange-red beeches rise beyond them on the slope; two hoop-tents, or kibitkas, just large enough to creep into, are near the fires, where the women are cooking the gypsy's *bouillon*, that savoury stew of all things good: vegetables, meat, and scraps, and savouries, collected as it were in the stockpot from twenty miles round. Hodge, the stay-at-home, sturdy carter, eats bread and cheese and poor bacon sometimes; he looks with true British scorn on all scraps and soups, and stockpots and *bouillons*—not for him, not he; he would rather munch dry bread and cheese for every meal all the year round, though he could get bits as easy as the other and without begging. The gypsy is a cook. The man with a gold ring in his ear; the woman with a silver ring on her finger, coarse black snaky hair like a horse's mane; the boy with naked olive feet; dark eyes all of them, and an Oriental, sidelong look, and a strange inflection of tone that turns our common English words into a foreign language—there they camp in the fern, in the sun, their Eastern donkeys of Syria scattered round them, their children rolling about like foals in the grass, a bit out of the distant Orient under our Western oaks.

It is the nature of the oak to be still, it is the nature of the hawk to roam with the wind. The Anglo-Saxon labourer remains in his cottage generation after generation, ploughing the same fields; the express train may rush by, but he feels no wish to rush with it; he scarcely turns to look at it; all the note he takes is that it marks the time to 'knock off' and ride the horses home. And if hard want at last forces

him away, and he emigrates, he would as soon jog to the port in a wagon, a week on the road, as go by steam; as soon voyage in a sailing-ship as by the swift Cunarder. The swart gypsy, like the hawk, for ever travels on, but, like the hawk, that seems to have no road, and yet returns to the same trees, so he, winding in circles of which we civilised people do not understand the map, comes, in his own times and seasons, home to the same waste spot, and cooks his savoury *bouillon* by the same beech. They have camped here for so many years, that it is impossible to trace when they did not; it is wild still, like themselves. Nor has their nature changed any more than the nature of the trees.

The gypsy loves the crescent moon, the evening star, the clatter of the fern-owl, the beetle's hum. He was born on the earth in the tent, and he has lived like a species of human wild animal ever since. Of his own free-will he will have nothing to do with rites or litanies; he may perhaps be married in a place of worship, to make it legal, that is all. At the end, were it not for the law, he would for choice be buried beneath the 'fire-place' of their children's children. He will not dance to the pipe ecclesiastic, sound it who may—churchman, dissenter, priest, or laic. Like the trees, he is simply indifferent. All the great wave of teaching and text and tracts and missions and the produce of the printing-press has made no impression upon his race any more than upon the red-deer that roam in the forest behind his camp. The negroes have their fetich, every nation its idols; the gypsy alone has none—not even a superstitious observance; they have no idolatry of the Past, neither have they the exalted thought of the Present. It is very strange that it should be so at this the height of our civilisation, and you might go many thousand miles and search from Africa to Australia before you would find another people without a Deity. That can only be seen under an English sky, under English oaks and beeches.

Are they the oldest race on earth? and have they worn out all the gods? Have they worn out all the hopes and fears of the human heart in tens of thousands of years, and do they merely live, acquiescent to fate? For some have thought to trace in the older races an apathy as with the Chinese, a religion of moral maxims and some few joss-house superstitions, which they themselves full well know to be naught, worshipping their ancestors, but with no vital living force, like that which drove Mohammed's bands to zealous fury, like that which sent our own Puritans over the sea in the *Mayflower*. No living faith. So old, so very, very old, older than the Chinese, older than the Copts of Egypt, older than the Aztecs; back to those dim Sanskrit times that seem like the clouds on the far horizon of human experience, where space and chaos begin to take shape, though but of vapour. So old, they went through civilisation ten thousand years since; they have worn it all out, even hope in the future; they merely live acquiescent to fate, like the red-deer. The crescent moon, the evening star, the clatter of the fern-owl, the red embers of the wood-fire, the pungent smoke blown round about by the occasional puffs of wind, the shadowy trees, the sound of the horses cropping the grass, the night that steals on till the stubbles

alone are light among the fields—the gypsy sleeps in his tent on mother-earth; it is, you see, primeval man with primeval nature. One thing he gains at least—an iron health, an untiring foot, women whose haunches bear any burden, children whose naked feet are not afraid of the dew.

By sharp contrast, the Anglo-Saxon labourer who lives in the cottage close by and works at the old timbered farmstead, is profoundly religious.

The gypsies return from their rambling soon after the end of hop-picking, and hold a kind of informal fair on the village green with cock-shies, swings, and all the clumsy games that extract money from clumsy hands. It is almost the only time of the year when the labouring people have any cash; their weekly wages are mortgaged beforehand; the hop-picking money comes in a lump, and they have something to spend. Hundreds of pounds are paid to meet the tally or account kept by the pickers, the old word tally still surviving, and this has to be charmed out of their pockets. Besides the gypsies' fair, the little shopkeepers in the villages send out circulars to the most outlying cottage announcing the annual sale at an immense sacrifice; anything to get the hop-pickers' cash; and the packmen come round, too, with jewelry and lace and finery. The village by the Forest has been haunted by the gypsies for a century; its population in the last thirty years has much increased, and it is very curious to observe how the gypsy element has impregnated the place. Not only are the names gypsy; the faces are gypsy; the black coarse hair, high cheek-bones, and peculiar forehead, linger; even many of the shopkeepers have a distinct trace, and others that do not show it so much, are known to be nevertheless related.

Until land became so valuable—it is now again declining—these Forest grounds of heath and bracken were free to all comers, and great numbers of squatters built huts and inclosed pieces of land. They cleared away the gorse and heath and grubbed the fir-tree stumps, and found, after a while, that the apparently barren sand could grow a good sward. No one would think anything could flourish on such an arid sand, exposed at a great height on the open hill to the cutting winds. Contrary, however, to appearances, fair crops, and sometimes two crops of hay are yielded, and there is always a good bite for cattle. These squatters consequently came to keep cows, sometimes one and sometimes two—anticipating the three acres and a cow—and it is very odd to hear the women at the hop-picking telling each other they are going to churn to-night. They have, in fact, little dairies. Such are the better class of squatters. But others there are who have shown no industry, half gypsies, who do anything but work—tramp, beg, or poach; sturdy fellows, stalking round with toy-brooms for sale, with all the blackguardism of both races. They keep just within the law; they do not steal or commit burglary; but decency, order, and society they set utterly at defiance. For instance, a gentleman pleased with the splendid view, built a large mansion in one spot, never noticing that the entrance was opposite a row of cottages, or rather thinking no evil of it. The result was that neither his wife nor visitors could go in or out

without being grossly insulted, without rhyme or reason, merely for the sake of blackguardism. Now, the pure gypsy in his tent or the Anglo-Saxon labourer would not do this; it was the half-breed. The original owner was driven from his premises; and they are said to have changed hands several times since from the same cause. All over the parish this half-breed element shows its presence by the extraordinary and unusual coarseness of manner. The true English rustic is always civil, however rough, and will not offend you with anything unspeakable, so that at first it is quite bewildering to meet with such behaviour in the midst of green lanes. This is the explanation—the gypsy taint. Instead of the growing population obliterating the gypsy, the gypsy has saturated the English folk.

When people saw the red man driven from the prairies and backwoods of America, and whole States as large as Germany without a single Indian left, much was written on the extermination of the aborigines by the stronger Saxon. As the generations lengthen, the facts appear to wear another aspect. From the intermarriage of the lower orders with the Indian squaws, the Indian blood has got into the Saxon veins, and now the cry is that the red man is exterminating the Saxon, so greatly has he leavened the population. The typical Yankee face, as drawn in *Punch*, is indeed the red Indian profile with a white skin and a chimney-pot hat. Upon a small scale, the same thing has happened in this village by the Forest; the gypsy half-breed has stained the native blood. Perhaps races like the Jew and gypsy, so often quoted as instances of the permanency of type, really owe that apparent fixidity to their power of mingling with other nations. They are kept alive as races by mixing; otherwise, one of two things would happen—the Jew and the gypsy must have died out, or else have supplanted all the races of the globe. Had the Jews been so fixed a type, by this time their offspring would have been more numerous than the Chinese. The reverse, however, is the case; and therefore, we may suppose they must have become extinct, had it not been for fresh supplies of Saxon, Teuton, Spanish, and Italian blood. It is in fact the intermarriages that have kept the falsely so-called pure races of these human parasites alive. The mixing is continually going on. The gypsies who still stay in their tents, however, look askance upon those who desert them for the roof. Two gypsy women, thoroughbred, came into a village shop and bought a variety of groceries, ending with a pound of biscuits and a Guy Fawkes' mask for a boy. They were clad in dirty jackets and hats, druggle-tails, unkempt and unwashed, with orange and red kerchiefs round their necks (the gypsy colours). Happening to look out of window, they saw a young servant-girl with a perambulator on the opposite side of the 'street'; she was tidy and decently dressed, looking after her mistress' children in civilised fashion; but they recognised her as a deserter from the tribe, and blazed with contempt. 'Don't she look a figure!' exclaimed these dirty creatures.

The short hours shorten, and the leaf-crop is gathered to the great barn of the earth; the oaks alone, more tenacious, retain their leaves,

that have now become a colour like new leather. It is too brown for buff—it is more like fresh harness. The berries are red on the holly bushes and holly trees that grow, whole copses of them, on the forest slopes—the Great Rough—the half-wild sheep have polished the stems of these holly trees till they shine, by rubbing their fleeces against them. The farmers have been drying their damp wheat in the oasthouses over charcoal fires, and wages are lowered, and men discharged. Vast loads of brambles and thorns, dead firs, useless hop-poles and hobbines and gorse are drawn together for the great bonfire on the green. The 5th of November bonfires are still vital institutions, and from the top of the hill you may see them burning in all directions, as if an enemy had set fire to the hamlets.

BY ORDER OF THE LEAGUE.

CHAPTER XIX.

NEAR one window stood a high Japanese screen, with plate-glass panels. Isodore had barely time to conceal herself behind this, when Le Gautier entered. He seemed somewhat hurried, but otherwise calm enough, as he walked into the room and towards Enid. 'Before I leave'—Then he stopped suddenly.

Sir Geoffrey was standing a little way back from the group, one hand behind his back, the other pointing with unsteady forefinger to Linda Despard, while he never moved his eyes from Le Gautier's face. A little flick of the nostrils, a quiver of the lip, and the Frenchman was himself again. But Sir Geoffrey never moved; he merely opened his lips, and snapped out one word, 'Well?'

'Is this a theatrical rehearsal?' Le Gautier asked at length.

'I am waiting,' the baronet returned, 'for some explanation. To a man of your astuteness, I need not be explicit. This lady, monsieur, and you, I hear, are old acquaintances.'

'You talk in riddles, Sir Geoffrey.'

'You are anxious to gain time. I, on the other hand, do not wish to be too hard upon you. Let me explain. Miss Linda Despard—who has been in my house for some time, the result of an accident, the details of which you have probably heard—turns out to be an old friend of yours. She is dressed this moment, you perceive, in a character which had been rehearsed under your personal superintendence—the character of my late brother.'

'But what can this possibly have to do with me?'

'A truce to this folly!' Sir Geoffrey cried warmly. 'I have heard everything about the jugglery at Paddington—the mirrors, and Pepper's Ghosts, and the whole miserable machinery by which I was deluded.'

'Then you no longer believe?' Le Gautier asked, fixing his glittering eyes upon the baronet's face.

But the magnetic power was gone now; the

glance was returned as sternly. Sir Geoffrey seemed a new man. 'I do not believe,' he replied.

'Then take the consequences—be a haunted, miserable man for the rest of your days! You will not be warned. I have done all I can for you. If you like to believe the tale you have heard, I will not prevent you. I say again, take the consequences.'

'On the contrary, my good sir, it is you who will be the principal sufferer. I wish to make this interview as pleasant as possible, and cannot do better than by making it brief. There was a little contract between us, which you will consider at an end from this moment.'

'And why?' Le Gautier asked hotly. 'You have proved nothing against me at present. This Linda Despard, whose tale you have been listening to, is no friend of mine.'

'Can you look her in the face and say that she is wrong?' Sir Geoffrey interrupted. 'Of course, you cannot deny the truth of her words. Then why am I bound to fulfil my contract with you?'

'Because I have your word it shall be so. On your word, and by the power I hold over you, I claim my wife still.'

'And in good time, you shall have her, Hector le Gautier.'

The group assembled there looked suddenly at Lucrece, as she spoke. She came forward now, facing the Frenchman, who eyed her with an undisguised sneer.

'And what has the maid of Miss Charteris to do with me?'

'Much,' she answered quietly.—'Do you know who I am?'

'A servant who has got into the drawing-room by mistake. If I am wrong, please enlighten me.'

Lucrece stepped forward, throwing her head back, and placing one hand upon a table at her side. 'I will enlighten you. Five years is a long time in a lifetime like mine, but your memory will carry you back to the Villa Mattio. Hector le Gautier, I am Lucrece Visci, sister of your friend Carlo Visci.'

'And I am no wiser now.'

'But I am,' Enid exclaimed.—'Father, you remember Signor Visci, the artist who used to meet us at Rome?'

'Yes, my dear'—with a glance at Le Gautier—'a fine specimen of an Italian gentleman. The only unpleasant recollection I have of him is, that he first introduced me to Monsieur le Gautier.'

The Frenchman's eyes flashed, and he moved as if to speak; but Lucrece continued rapidly: 'You may not remember me; but you have not forgotten my sister, Genevieve.—Ah! I have moved you now!—Miss Charteris, you were in Rome when she disappeared. Her false lover stands before you now!'

'It is false!' Le Gautier exclaimed. 'Prove that I!'

'It is true.—Prove it! Look at your own face there!' Lucrece cried, pointing to a mirror opposite him. 'Look there, and deny it if you can!'

'True or false, I cannot waste words with you. —Sir Geoffrey, I hold you to your promise.—Enid, you shall keep your word.'

'We are not in the habit of bestowing the daughters of our house upon adventurers,' Sir Geoffrey replied. 'I am sure your natural good sense and a little calm reflection will show you the folly of your demand.'

'My father has spoken for me,' Enid said. 'I have nothing to add.'

Le Gautier stepped across the room to her. She rose to her feet in alarm. Lucrece stood between the two, and grasping Enid by the wrist, and laying her hand upon the Frenchman's shoulder, held him back. 'Are you mad that you ask this thing?' she asked.

'And wherefore? How does it concern you?'

She looked him steadily in the face as she replied: 'Then I must refresh your memory;' and raising her voice, till it rang through the lofty room, 'because you have a wife already!'

Le Gautier staggered back; but he was not beaten yet. 'Another of your little fabrications,' he said mockingly.

'Look at him!' Lucrece exclaimed, turning to the others, and pointing at the detected man with infinite scorn. 'Look into his face—mark his dejected air, though he braves it out well, and tell me if I am wrong.'

'Your word is doubtless a good one; but there is something better than words, and that is proof. Do you not think I can see through this paltry conspiracy which has been got up against me? But you have the wrong man to deal with in me for that. I will have the compact fulfilled; my power is not over yet; and, Sir Geoffrey, I give you one more chance. Refuse at your peril.'

'I do refuse,' Sir Geoffrey answered icily. 'Do your worst.'

'That is your decision?—And now, as to these groundless accusations you have brought against me. You have made them; prove them.' He turned to Lucrece with a gesture which was almost noble, all the actor's instinct aroused in him now. There was one desperate chance for him yet.

'You had best take care, if I accept you at your word.'

'I wish to be taken at my word. I demand your proofs!'

'And you shall have them!' Saying these words, Lucrece glided swiftly from the room.

An awkward silence fell upon the group. Le Gautier was the first to speak. There was a kind of moisture in his eye, and an air of resigned melancholy on his face. 'You have misjudged me,' he said sorrowfully. 'Some day, you will be ashamed of this.—Sir Geoffrey, you are the victim of a designing woman, who seeks, for some reason, to traduce my fair fame. If I have a wife, let them bring me face to face with her here.'

'You have your wish, Hector, for I am here!'

Le Gautier bounded forward like a man who has received a mortal hurt, and gazed at the speaker with glaring eyes. Valerie was standing before him, not without agitation herself. A low cry burst from his lips, and he drew his shaking hand down his white damp face. 'What brings

you here?' he asked, his voice sounding strangely to his own ears, as if it came from far away. 'Woman! why do you come here now, to destroy me utterly?'

She shrank back—an eloquent gesture to the onlookers—a gesture seven years' freedom from thralldom had not obliterated. 'You wished to see me. Lo! I am here! Turn round to your friends now, and deny that I am your lawful wife—deny again that you have ever seen me before, and put me to the proof.—Why do you not speak? Why do you not show a little of that manhood you used to have? Strike me, as you have done often in the times gone by—anything better than standing there, a poor, pitiful, detected swindler—a miserable hound indeed!'

There was a dead silence now, only broken by Le Gautier's heavy breathing, and the rustle of his sleeve as he wiped the perspiration from his face.

'There is the proof you demanded,' Lucrece said at length. 'We are waiting for you to deny the witness of your eyes.'

But still Le Gautier did not speak, standing there like some stone figure, his limbs almost powerless. He raised his head a moment, then lowered it again swiftly. He tried to articulate a few words, but his tongue refused its office.

Sir Geoffrey laid his hand upon the bell. 'Have you nothing to say?' he asked.

'I—I— Let me go out—the place is choking me!'

Sir Geoffrey rang the bell sharply. 'Then this interview had better close. It has already been too long, and degrading.—James, show Monsieur le Gautier out, if you please.—I have the honour to wish you good-morning; and if we do meet again,' he added in a stern undertone, 'remember, it is as strangers.'

Le Gautier, without another word or look, left the room, Lucrece following a moment later, and leading Valerie away. Isodore stepped out from her hiding-place, her face alternately scornful and tender.

'We owe you a heavy debt of gratitude indeed!' Sir Geoffrey exclaimed warmly. 'It is extremely good of you to take all this trouble for mere strangers. Accept my most sincere thanks!'

'We are not quite strangers,' Isodore replied, turning to Enid. 'Lucrece told you who she was; let me tell you who I am. I have never met you, though once I hoped to do so. I am Genevieve Visci!'

'What! Signor Visci's sister—the girl who— who?—'

'Do not hesitate to say it. Yes, Isodore and Genevieve are one. Out of recollection of old times, when you were so kind to my dear brother, I have not forgotten you, knowing Le Gautier so well.'

'But Lucrece, your sister, to come here as my maid. And Le Gautier—how did you know? I am all at sea yet.'

'It is a long sad story, and some day, when I know you better, I will tell you all, but not now. But one thing, please, remember, that come what will, Le Gautier cannot harm you now. He may threaten, but he is powerless. I have only to hold up my hand!—'

'And Frederick—Mr Maxwell?'

'Do not be impatient. You will see him to-morrow; for this evening I have need of him. You have not the slightest grounds for anxiety. Le Gautier will never harm any one more.'

'How strangely, sternly, you speak,' Enid replied.

Isodore smiled. 'Do I? Well, you heard what Lucrece said, and I may have planned a little retaliation of my own. The eastern eagle flies slowly, but his flight is sure. Trust me, and fear not.'

Enid was bewildered. But the time was near when she was to understand.

With baffled fury and revenge raging in his heart, Le Gautier turned away in the direction of his lodgings, anywhere to get away from himself for a time, nothing left to him now but to wreak his vengeance upon Sir Geoffrey in the most diabolical way his fiendish ingenuity could contrive—and Isodore. By this time, Maxwell was no more; there was some grain of satisfaction in that; and he had Marie St Jean to fall back upon.

He sat brooding in his rooms till nearly nine—time to attend the meeting of the League, the last one he determined that should ever see his face. Had he known how fatally true this was, he would have faced a thousand dangers rather than gone to Gray's Inn Road that night. It was nearly ten when he lowered his gas, and struck off across the side streets in the direction of Holborn. When he reached his destination, he walked up-stairs, the only arrival as yet. Had he been less preoccupied, he would not have failed to notice the glance bestowed upon him by the custodian. He lingered about the room till one by one the company came in.

They were not long in commencing business. Le Gautier did not occupy the chair on this occasion; the proceedings of the evening were important, and a Supreme Councillor was present. He greeted each man coldly. To Le Gautier his manner was stern to the last degree. The routine commenced, and was conducted quietly for some time in the briefest, dryest fashion. Then the president for the evening rose, and taking from his pocket the gold moidore, commanded every one there to throw his upon the table. Presently, nine golden coins glittered on the green baize. 'One short,' the president said sternly. 'Whose?'

They looked round, each waiting for the other to speak.

'It is mine,' Le Gautier exclaimed. 'I did not think it necessary.'

'You have no right to think; it is not in your province. If you have in any way parted with it'—He stopped significantly, and Le Gautier hastily intervened.

'I humbly beg your pardon. I will fetch it immediately. I have not far to go; I can return at once. In justice to myself, I am sure you will permit me to fetch it.'

'No!' thundered the Chief Councillor with a glance in Le Gautier's face that made his heart beat thick and fast. 'And as to justice, you shall have it presently, to the uttermost scruple.—Gentlemen, there is a traitor present!'

With one accord they sprang to their feet, suspicion and alarm in every eye.

'Who is it?' they cried. 'Death to the traitor!'

'Look round among yourselves, and see if you can discover him.—No? Then he wears a good mask who has a hard conscience.—Stand up, traitor!—ay, the most despicable; stand up, and look us in the face! Who is the man who has enjoyed our deepest confidences—the man we have to thank Isodore for discovering?—Stand up, I say! Rise, Hector le Gautier!'

The Frenchman knew his last hour had come; he knew that such a bold accusation as this could not be made without the most convincing proof. But despite his failings, he was not the man to cower before such a great danger. He braced his nerves till they were like steel; there was no particle of fear in his face as he turned at bay.

'I had expected something like this,' he said. 'It is not likely that my promotion should pass by without incurring some jealousy. I will say nothing about my long services, the years I have spent in the service of the League. My accuser, and your proof!'

A murmur of applause ran round the table at this sentiment. There was no appearance of guilt here.

'Isodore is your accuser—the proofs she holds. You are charged with conspiracy to overthrow the League, in conjunction with another person. Your companion is one Marie St Jean.'

Even with his iron nerves under control as they were, Le Gautier could not repress a start, which was not lost upon the Councillor.

'Marie St Jean,' he continued, 'received from you certain papers for the purpose of handing them over to the police. The information contained therein is complete. Do you deny your handwriting?'

He threw a bundle of papers across the table to Le Gautier. As he read them, his white face became corpse-like in its livid hue. But he was fighting for his life now, and summoned all his self-command to his aid, knowing full well that if he was condemned, he would never leave that room alive. His calm air came back to him.

'I admit the handwriting—private memoranda stolen from my apartments. I am still waiting for your proof. Besides, Marie St Jean is a member of the League; she restored to me'—

'Your insignia, which you had the temerity to stake upon the colour at Homburg.—Salvarini, I call upon you to say if this is not so?'

'I would rather say nothing about this,' Salvarini said. Le Gautier noticed how distressed and agitated he was. 'I fear—I much fear you have too much proof, without calling upon me.'

'You stand by a friend, Luigi!' Le Gautier said bitterly. 'Do not think of me now. Every man must look to himself!'

'Sufficient of this,' the president interrupted. 'My proofs are overpowering. You are charged with packing the cards, to force the Brother Maxwell upon a dangerous mission.'

'Enough!' the prisoner exclaimed; 'confront me with my accuser!'

'You shall see her.—Isodore!'

As he raised his voice, a breathless hush fell upon the assembly. Presently, a woman entered; for a moment she looked at the group, and then raising her veil, showed her beautiful face.

'Marie!' A deep, bitter cry, following this word, burst from Le Gautier's lips, and he fell forward upon the table, his head upon his hands. There was no escape now, he knew full well. And the woman he thought had loved him—the woman who knew all his plans to the letter, was the Princess of the League, the most dangerous member, Isodore herself! Salvarini looked into her face for a moment, and then whispered one word—Genevieve; but she heard it, and smiled at him, pleased that one man should remember—heard the little word which struck a womanly chord in her heart, and was thankful. Then she made him a sign to be silent.

Stunned by the crushing force and suddenness of the blow, Le Gautier half lay there, with his head resting upon the table, no sound breaking the solemn silence. The president addressed the wretched man, asking him if he had anything to say.

He raised his head and looked dazedly around, then down again. 'I? No! I have nothing to say. My doom is sealed!'

'Bind him!'

Rough hands were laid upon the doomed wretch, and fastened him in his chair securely, taking care to make his bonds too tight for escape. Le Gautier did not resist; he knew now that there was no escape in all the wide world for him. They left him thus, trooping in to an adjoining room to go through the mockery of the trial which the orders of the League demanded.

When Le Gautier looked up, he was alone, save for Isodore. 'You are satisfied with your work now?'

'Yes, I am satisfied now,' Isodore echoed. 'So you thought to play me off against Enid Charteris, poor fool! Hector le Gautier, I am going to tax your memory. Do you remember one evening in the Mattio woods when you abandoned a lonely trusting girl, the sister of your friend? Do you remember laughing at a vow of vengeance five years ago? Justice is slow, but it is sure. Do you remember?'

'Yes. Is it possible that you can be?'

'Yes, it is possible, for I am Genevieve Visci! It is my turn now.' And without another word she left him.

Presently, a desire to live took the place of his dull despair. In an agony he tugged and turned, cutting his wrists with the keen rope till the blood ran down his hands. He could hear the low monotonous voices from the adjoining room, the hurrying footsteps in the road below; and only that thin wall between himself and safety. Even the window leading from the iron staircase was open, and the evening breeze fanned his white despairing face. He struggled again till his heart nearly burst, and then, worn out, broke into tears.

'Hector!'

He turned round, hardly certain whether it was a voice or a fancy. Gradually out of the mists a figure emerged, and creeping stealthily across the bare floor, came to his side. It was Valerie.

'So you have come to gloat over my misery too,' he whispered hoarsely. 'Go, or, manacled as I am, I shall do you a mischief.'

For answer, she drew a knife from her pocket, and commenced, with trembling fingers, to sever

his bonds. One by one the sharp knife cut through them, till at length he stood a free man. One grudging, grateful glance at the woman, and he disappeared.

CHRISTMAS IN A DĀK BUNGALOW.

I HAVE spent Christmas Day in England and abroad, in my own family, in mess, and with three commanding officers; but till the year 1883, I had never spent one absolutely alone. I had on this occasion another opportunity of spending the day in mess, for I was in India at the time; but I came to the conclusion that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush; and three days' leave for certain is better than a fortnight's in prospect; and having had rather a trying share of work for some time before Christmas, I decided to forego the usual 'going round the men's dinners,' with its concomitant drinking of curious and, I hope, rare liquors, eating pieces of Christmas pudding, and subsequently getting through the day in a manner more Sunday-like than actually amusing. So, on the 23d December I found myself about seven P.M. in the dāk bungalow of a river-side station in the Punjab, to which I had been recommended by a messmate as a good spot for a few days' duck-shooting. My servant, a Madrassi, rejoicing in the name of Zacharias—the 'Madras-man every time liking Christian name, sah'—had preceded me, and had got the principal agent for my three days' shooting in the shape of a shikaree, who bore the very unchristian name of Rukkum (Rook'em) Deen, in attendance to make arrangements for the morrow.

Now, I am not going to enter into a discussion on the subject of duck-shooting, for many reasons, of which I will mention, first, that I might have conducted such operations on any other three days of the year, if I could have got leave; second, that I am not very proud of my own prowess with a gun; third, that I didn't get much, though I saw a great deal; and fourth, that the subject of wildfowl shooting is not one to enter into in a light and frivolous spirit, but must be approached with awe, and with a due appreciation of nice distinctions of weights and measures, and a ready desire to hear all manner of extraordinary asseverations, however fond of truth the listener may be. Mine is a true story, and is only a collection of jottings and thoughts. After this explanation, I can safely skip over my doings on the 24th, which were confined solely to the region of the river and the somewhat distant society of the wildfowl.

Christmas Day opened fine and clear. That is a matter not of much note in India, where the weather is remarkable for its succession of fine clear days; but in England, Christmas Day—if my recollection serves me true—does not always open fine and clear. I was called at half-past six A.M.; and by eight had put my cartridges together, dispensed with a tub, had breakfast, and started for the river again. Outside the dāk bungalow, as luck would have it, I met an Englishman—a terrible thing on the continent, I know; but somehow in India we are not so painfully exclusive. I wished him good-morning and the compliments of the season; he returned

the sentiments; and that was all the conversation I had with a fellow-countryman on that day. I was on the river from half-past eight till four; but skip that period for the third of my reasons for making this no wildfowler's story. Soon after getting in, cleaning my gun, having my tub, and generally assuming a more civilised appearance, I heard the church bells ringing; and hurried off to find a children's service being conducted by a very nice, benevolent-looking clergyman, who had for his congregation about twenty children and a round dozen of adults, parents and so on. The reverend gentleman was giving the children a simple address as I entered, and I felt at home and happy. The little voices joined in singing hymns and saying prayers; and when the lines, 'Guard the sailors tossing on the deep blue sea,' were sung, I let my thoughts wander over a good many leagues of land and sea to where others were, as I felt sure, thinking of me in the midst of their Christmas doings.

On my return to the bungalow, I found that there was an Englishman living under the same roof, and felt that I should very much like to have a companion at my dinner. I accordingly sent Zacharias to find out who the Englishman was and what he was doing here; for I did not want to bore him with an invitation if he had come here for the express purpose of being alone with his thoughts. I imagine my faithful valet found the inquiry difficult of prosecution, or, what is more likely, that he gave it up in favour of seeing 'master's Christmas dinner' being properly cooked. Anyway, it was not till Zacharias brought me my soup that he brought the intelligence that 'the English gentleman having joint;' so my intentions were frustrated, and the only attention I could pay the mysterious stranger was to send him the following note:

DĀK BUNGALOW, Christmas Day.

DEAR SIR—I should be very proud if you would accept a glass of wine from my bottle, which I send by bearer, and drink with me to Absent Friends. I am very sorry I did not find out till too late that there was an Englishman in the bungalow, or I would have done myself the pleasure of asking if you would care to dine with a fellow-countryman on this occasion. Hoping you will excuse my intrusion, I am, sir, with all the compliments of the season, yours truly,

H. S.

I sent him at the same time an open bottle of 'Sparkling Wine,' and soon after received my bottle back, with but very little gone, and at the same time the following answer:

DEAR SIR—Thanks very many. A merry Christmas to you. I drink your health.—Yours sincerely,

I am very sorry I cannot put in the name of an eminent politician or other dignitary, by way of completing the story; but as I couldn't read it, my curiosity must remain for ever unsatisfied, and the mysterious stranger of Christmas Day, 1883, will remain wrapped up in his mystery, unless he chances to peruse these lines, and, remembering the incident, discloses himself.

As for my Christmas dinner, I must say it was as good as any government establishment, and

much better than most dāk bungalows could produce. The hand of Zacharias was betrayed in potato chips and cunning sauces. I can here fairly bring in that I had a duck of my own shooting, and the only thing wanting was bread. The forgetful *khansamah* or housekeeper had not warned the native baker, and I had to make the best I could of *chupatties*, a poor substitute; and I am convinced that its permanent institution on the English diet table would soon reduce us to a very low ebb indeed. But being in a properly Christmas frame of mind, good-will to all men, &c., I determined to make the best of a bad business, and toasted them before a wood-fire, thus giving myself an opportunity of introducing to Zacharias' notice, à la Mr Barlow, of Sandford and Merton fame, 'The Story of King Alfred and the Chupattie, or the Indigent Monarch and the Haughty Swineherd's Wife.' Wishing to be understood, I endeavoured to put the simple narrative in a somewhat Indianised language, and the following was the result:

'One time in Englishman's place, one King Alfred living.—Do you understand "king?" Mr Queen *subse burra rajah*' (the biggest swell of all).

Zacharias. Yes, sah.

'One time Alfred Sahib young man, and wanting to study how the newly franchised ones would vote.—No; I mean liking to see how his people's getting on *mallum*.—Do you understand?'

Zach. Yes, sah.

'Very well; he went to house of one man looking after pigs (*Suir ke kubberdarwallah*). That right?'

Zach. Yes, sah.

'Pigman's wife not knowing Alfred Sahib have much *Burra Bahadur* (Great Panjandrum), giving him some *chupatties* to toast before fire, same like Master doing now. Then pigman's wife going out to see pigs. Alfred Sahib besides being king of England, was a bit of a *Bajawallah* (music-man). When pigman's wife going out, Alfred Sahib playing on his *baja* same like Master on banjo. *Chupatties* getting burned; pigman's wife coming back, getting plenty angry, then stick-striking (*Lackri-marta*) Alfred Sahib.—Now, Zacharias, you understand all that?'

Zach. Yes, sah.

'What do you understand?'

Zach. Master not liking raw *chupatties*.

'Yes; and I would take this opportunity of impressing on you the many advantages to be gained by entirely giving up *chupatties* in favour of bread. Look at that piece of garbage I have got to eat! I warn you that so long as you and your fellow-men in India continue to eat *chupatties* and such-like nastiness, so long will you remain in that state of degradation and darkness that England was in, in the days of Alfred Sahib.—Do you understand?'

Zach. Yes, sah.

After this expression of sentiment, I went to dinner, and really enjoyed my toasted *chupattie*, as I had converted it into a sort of ship's biscuit, than which there is nothing better. When I felt the influence, benign and benevolent, of doing myself well, creeping over me, I was at the stage of my first glass of wine, and this was a bumper to Absent Friends. What a host of faces passed before my eyes as I shut them and

quaffed the time-honoured toast! How I could have moralised, and become sentimental and maudlin! But as that was not my intention at all, I wished all the dear good souls the 'Best of luck—lots of it, and may I soon be there to see!' and resumed my lessons in civilisation to Zacharias. I never before appreciated so thoroughly what a capital thing it is to have an English-speaking servant in India. Did I say English-speaking? I am afraid I did; but English-understanding would be a better expression, for I never gave Zacharias a chance of speaking till after dinner, when he came in capitally. I told him how shameful it was that his fellows would use the poisonous *dekskai* (cooking-pot), with its bi-monthly demand for tinning or for a substitute 'leading,' when kind English people tried to introduce the more familiar saucepan of iron and enamel. I told him how much better a slow-burning moderate fire was for cooking purposes than the pot-destroying furnaces of charcoal over which everything is cooked in India; how nothing was cooked through, but everything sodden inside and burned outside. I ingratiated myself again by drinking his health. I then attacked him on another point, and told him confidentially that if it was not for his fellows' silly ideas on the subject of caste, that we should never have taken the country; and was rather glad that he put a stop to this unwise disclosure and counsel by saying: 'God is good, sah. Gentlemen never knowing why caste, and not liking.'

At last I finished dinner; and then gave a few directions for the morning—to be called at half-past six, to have breakfast ready at seven A.M., and to shut up rooms and come with me. But the demon of speechifying was on me, the *cacothetes loquendi*, and nothing under an eighteen-hundred horse-power steam fire-engine could quench the raging fire that had mastered the movements of my tongue. The only consolation was that I gave Zacharias more chances. I asked him questions. 'When Master going to the war' (there was none in prospect), 'what will Zacharias do?'

'I will always come with Master. Master good to me, sah.'

'Has Zacharias ever heard of Russian peoples?'

'Yes, sah. I was always hearing when I was little child in *i-school*, Russian peoples coming—never come. God is good, and Russian peoples bad peoples. If Russian peoples coming, then Queen's peoples putting them back to their own land; but never coming, sah.'

'But the Baboos say they are not well treated sometimes; and they make a lot of bobbery, and do plenty bad talking, and not liking English peoples. I tell you, Zacharias, if the Russian people came, the Baboos won't have a chance of holding their silly meetings; they'll be put to clean the Russian gentlemen's backyards, and do all the dirty work that can be found for them.'

'Yes, sah. These Baboos are fools. If English gentlemen not coming, where is got Baboo? Only Bengal people talking that way. Madras peoples always right.'

'Bravo, Zacharias! Here's a toast to Madras, the benighted presidency, and may she always have as staunch countrymen as you!'

'Thank you, sah.'

'But about these Russians—tell me some more.'

'Russian peoples got no money; Queen got plenty money. English soldiers plenty strong, so Russian peoples not coming.'

'That's right. You stick to that; and when you hear the silly Baboos saying they are down-trodden, you tell them, with my compliments, that they are a pack of fools, and that they had better not wait for anybody else to tread on them, when they hear the *Sahiblogues* [Englishmen] are going.'

'Yes, sah; that is right. If English peoples not coming here, I would never be wearing such clothes as these.' (Zacharias is very well pleased with himself when he has got on his clean dinner clothes, as he had, to celebrate Christmas Day of 1883.)

'Now, you understand what I say, eh?'

'Yes, sah.' (Here came the crushing blow, the long-deserved snub to my loquacity.) 'Master wants calling at half-past six, and breakfast at seven.—Good-night, sah.'

I couldn't help but take a hint so gently given; and so, bidding my faithful Zacharias—I sincerely believe he is faithful—'good-night,' I knocked the ashes out of my pipe, and brought to a conclusion my Christmas Day.

A NOVEL ADVENTURE.

It was always my conviction that a Briton ought never to go abroad to seek beautiful scenery until he had travelled all over his own country, and accordingly in early manhood I made a series of walking tours until I had seen every variety of English, Welsh, Scotch, and Irish scenery. It was in the course of one of these tours that I came across the pretty little village of Ferneville. Hills softly undulating and beautifully wooded surrounded the place; while two large ponds and numerous brooks supplied fishing enough to satisfy the wants of even an ardent angler like myself. The village was one of those little places where the population seems never to increase and the trade of the builder to be unknown. Visited by few strangers, this secluded village was just the kind of place for a traveller to rest himself and recruit. Here, then, I resolved to take my ease until such time as I felt disposed to resume my journey. The village inn afforded comfortable quarters, and here I ensconced myself, filling up part of my time in posting up my diary and writing to relatives and friends, matters which I had very much neglected. Much of my time was spent, too, in taking long rambles into the country and exploring the district for miles round; often, too, I took my fishing tackle with me, and seldom returned empty handed.

One day, when I was about setting off on one of these rambles, a young fellow arrived at the inn, having had apparently a pretty long walk. He had started, he said, early that morning from the town of B—, purposing to reach C— in the afternoon; but having taken what he understood to be a short-cut, he had lost his bearings—a thing people often do when they take 'short-cuts'—and now found himself some twelve miles from his destination. From what

he said, however, I found that it was not really necessary for him to be in C— before the next day; and as he seemed an agreeable and companionable gentleman, I suggested that he should keep me company for the rest of the day, sleep at the inn that night, and resume his journey next morning. This he agreed to do; and my bedroom having two beds, it was arranged that he should share it with me.

Half an hour's conversation with my new acquaintance confirmed my good opinion of his sociable qualities, and I congratulated myself upon the agreeable companionship I had secured for the better part of a day. We dined together, and then set out for a stroll, returning in time for supper, well pleased with each other's society; at all events, I was charmed with my companion, his light-heartedness and extreme vivacity coming as a refreshing and an agreeable change after the rather dull company of the few villagers whose acquaintance I had cultivated. A chat and a pipe followed supper, and then, in good spirits, we retired for the night.

As was usual with me, I was soon lost in slumber; but after being asleep for what seemed a considerable time, I found myself awake and dimly conscious of some one moving about the room. The day was beginning to break, and sufficient light penetrated through the window-blind to render objects in the room dimly visible. My ideas were at first hazy, and no recollection of my companion crossed my mind; hence I concluded that I was alone in the room with this burglar, as I took him to be, and I resolved to watch him quietly. His back was towards me; but he turned suddenly, and as the feeble light from the window fell across his face, I recognised my companion of the previous day. His expression was wild and savage, and in his right hand he held a large, long knife, with which from time to time he struck fiercely at the empty air, muttering rapidly words of which I could not catch the import! I am not a timid man, but I must confess that a kind of sickly feeling came over me as it flashed across me that I was alone with a lunatic, and that, too, at a time when, the rest of the household being asleep, the chance of any help was very remote. To be alone in bed at night while an armed burglar is prowling about the room, is bad enough; but when, in place of the burglar, you have a madman, the case is infinitely worse; an attack might be made at any moment, and without the least provocation.

My mind reviewed rapidly the incidents of the previous day. I had noticed nothing in my companion's demeanour which would lead any one to suppose he was insane. True, I had been struck with his vivacity, and rather astonished at the rapidity with which he would pass from one topic to another; but this had simply pleased me as a trait of originality. Through my half-opened eyes and by the increasing light, I now saw him suddenly pause in his movements, bend forward, and gaze half eagerly, half hesitatingly in my direction. My heart nearly ceased to beat. Would he come forward? He advanced quickly a couple of steps, his face lighted up with a fiendish anticipatory pleasure; then he stopped for a moment. Should I spring from the bed and rush upon him? There was still

about half the length of the room between us. No; the distance was too great for me to take him by surprise. He again came quickly forward, stood for a moment by my bedside, and then, with a savage scowl, the knife was thrown back to strike. But before it could descend, I had darted from the bed and was upon him, my left hand grasping his right wrist. 'Madman!' I hissed, as I forced him backwards, 'drop the knife!' In another moment we had fallen heavily, he undermost. His leg had caught against his own bed, and my weight had forced him backwards. In falling, his head struck against a piece of furniture with sufficient force to stun him. I took advantage of this to possess myself of the knife, which I had scarcely done when he opened his eyes. I planted myself firmly, expecting that he would renew the struggle; but, to my surprise, he burst into a laugh, and at length exclaimed: 'Well, I have made a fool of myself, I must admit. I am no more mad than you are; and I am sure I have no designs against your life, however suspicious things may appear. Loose me, and I will explain all, although I know that in doing so I shall lay myself open to your ridicule.'

The laughter was so hearty and the tone so genuine, that I complied; besides, I had the knife if the worst came to the worst.

'The fact is,' he commenced, 'I am stage-struck (don't laugh at me more than you can help). I wanted to go on the stage, but to this my father strongly objected. The craze was, however, too strong upon me to allow of my quietly giving up the idea, and at last the opportunity of realising my ambition presented itself. Near our town is a small place where there is a little theatre—a poor affair, and visited only by third or fourth rate companies. Well, I made acquaintance with a party of travelling players there, and one of their number having left them, it was arranged that I should take his place at the next town they visited. I was walking on there, when, getting rather out of my course, as you know, I met you. I had expected being alone last evening and going over my part in private; but, of course, your being with me stopped that. I woke very early this morning, and being full of anxiety to make sure of my part, and imagining you to be fast asleep—as I believe *now* you really were at first—I could not resist the temptation of trying a rehearsal *sotto voce*. In the play, I have to murder my rival in his sleep; and your lying there in bed gave such a realistic air to the thing, that I could not resist going through my part of the play with you as the rival, seeing you were, as I thought, safe asleep. Judge, then, of my feelings when, without a moment's warning, you suddenly sprang upon me! Surprised and confused, I knew not for the moment what to do; but before I could collect myself, I had stumbled and fallen; and I suppose I must have been stunned, for I remember nothing more until I found myself on the floor, with you kneeling upon my chest, and looking quite prepared for a deadly struggle.—Now, you know all, and I hope you are none the worse off for the little adventure than I am?'

My answer was that I was only too glad

the affair had terminated in so peaceable a manner, and that my sleeping companion, instead of being a lunatic, was only afflicted with a mania for the stage. I added, that I hoped the incident might cure him of the craze. And so it did. My companion did not appear on the professional stage, though I have often seen him to advantage in private theatricals, and have frequently watched him rehearse, but never with the same uncomfortable feelings as I did that night at the village inn.

SOME ASPECTS OF CANADIAN PROGRESS.

FOR those who cannot actually travel over the Canadian Pacific Railway from Montreal to Vancouver, in British Columbia, perhaps the next best thing is to look through the eyes of the *Times* correspondent, whose 'Canadian Tour' has just been reprinted from the columns of that journal. Progress in the North-west is so rapid, that even this journey, performed quite recently, will soon grow antiquated; but many of the particulars are so full of interest for all who are concerned in the progress of the Canadian Dominion, that we make no apology in gleanings the most important facts therefrom, and from other sources, for the general reader.

The completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway has been the signal for embarkation in other comprehensive designs for opening up and furthering the interests of the Dominion. The Hudson Bay Railway, running from the heart of Manitoba to Port Nelson, on Hudson Bay, is proceeding apace, and will open up a region hitherto almost shut out from communication with commercial centres, besides giving an opportunity of testing the feasibility of the proposed short sea-route from Canada to Liverpool. This route by way of Hudson Bay, which will save about one thousand miles as compared with the Quebec route, has been reported upon by officials on behalf of the Canadian government, and the various reports agree that it will be navigable for four months of the year at least.

In the last session of the Canadian Parliament, an Act of Incorporation was passed on behalf of a new railway scheme to be called the Winnipeg and North Pacific Railway. Starting from Winnipeg, it has been planned to run in a north-westerly direction, bending to the west, and to strike the Pacific Ocean at Port Simpson, a point which is said to be four hundred miles nearer Yokohama than Vancouver, the present terminus of the Canadian Pacific. The country to be passed through is highly fertile, with great mineral wealth; and it is expected that this saving in distance will tell in its favour.

Meantime, the trade arrangements of the Canadian Pacific seem to meet with growing favour. Mr Everett Frazar, who has been concerned in more than one shipment of tea from China and Japan by this new route, reports that tea-importers in Canada and the United States are more than pleased with the quick despatch given to their orders, and the excellent condition in which consignments have reached them. One result has been that Chicago is rapidly overtaking New York as a tea-distributing centre.

Yokohama being about five hundred miles nearer the western terminus of the Canadian Pacific than to San Francisco, two or three days can be saved by the Dominion route. The total tea imports for the season by the seven vessels already chartered are reckoned at 7,878,033 pounds, of the value of half a million pounds sterling. Suitable docks and wharfrage have been prepared at Vancouver for the growing trade, and a fine three-story stone and brick hotel, which will be open for guests in the spring, is being erected.

The main characteristics of the line are thus described by the *Times* correspondent. The first three hundred and fifty miles, carrying the line westward from Montreal to Lake Nipissing, is through old and well-developed country, commanding the timber traffic of the Ottawa River valley. For the next one thousand miles to the edge of the great prairie east of Winnipeg, the country passed through has extensive forests, and lands abounding in copper, iron, and silver. For nine hundred miles westward of Winnipeg there is a flat or rolling prairie, which is being rapidly settled, and which comprises some of the richest agricultural soil in the world. Nearly the entire length of the land-grant of the railway is already located here. This rich soil extends to the base of the Rockies. The railway now passes over a rough country, through mountain ranges, with immense forests, and splendid scenery. The best materials have been used in its construction throughout; the bridges and trestles are built in the strongest possible way; and the arrangements for traffic are efficient. The manager of the line told the *Times* correspondent that he could at present undertake to transport eight thousand armed men a day from the Atlantic to the Pacific, should any Eastern complication render this necessary.

The distance from the eastern terminus at Montreal to the western end at Vancouver is two thousand nine hundred and nine miles, or three hundred and sixty-two miles less than the line between New York and San Francisco. From Liverpool to Vancouver by the Canadian Pacific route is five thousand one hundred and sixty miles. Across the Pacific Ocean to Yokohama, by the Canadian route from Liverpool, is nine thousand five hundred and forty-six miles, or eight hundred and eighty miles less than by the New York and San Francisco route. The traveller may choose the all-rail route westward, round the northern shore of Lake Superior, or by way of Owen Sound and Lake Superior, in the new steel steam-ships, the *Alberta* or *Athabasca*.

No city in Canada has grown with greater rapidity than Winnipeg, the capital of Manitoba, which has now from twenty-seven to thirty thousand inhabitants, and no part of the country owes more for its development to the railway than the Red River Valley. Butter, cheese, vegetables, fruit, and grain, are now exported in large quantities. To further open up the prairie region, an elaborate network of branch railways has been arranged for, and town-lots have been laid off in connection therewith. The Manitoba and North-western Railway runs north-west from Portage La Prairie towards Prince Albert.

Regina, the capital of the North-west, stands on Pile of Bones River, a tributary of the

Qu'Appelle River, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-nine miles west of Montreal. This place, of three hundred houses and not more than one thousand people, is the residence of the Governor of the North-west. Our correspondent likens the present appearance of the place to a section cut out of the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, with a few scattered rows of wooden houses set down upon it. In a little square-built brick courthouse, outside the town, Louis Riel, leader of the late rebellion in the North-west, was tried, and afterwards hanged at the barracks, about two miles off. Here are the headquarters of the mounted police, the constabulary of the North-west, the entire force consisting of about one thousand men.

There are few places of any importance westward of Regina; the villages and settlements are as yet in their infancy, and we hear such grotesque names as 'Moose Jaw,' 'Swift Current,' and 'Medicine Hat.' The large cattle ranges of Canada are situated in the south-western portion of the province of Alberta, Fort MacLeod and Calgary being two great centres for the ranchmen. Experienced cattle-men have pronounced the eastern slope of the Rockies as furnishing the best grass and water for large herds, in Western America. The winter there is less rigorous than in Manitoba and the older provinces. When the Canadian Pacific reaches Calgary, it runs along the valley of the Bow River, and crosses the summit of the Rockies at an elevation of five thousand five hundred and sixty feet.

At Donald, past which the Columbia River flows with a swift current, house-building is going on for the settlers, who at first had to live in tents and cabins. This place is destined to be an extensive settlement, with railway repair shops. The surface is covered with forests, except where clearings have been made. On leaving the Columbia, the railway turns sharply to the south, into the cañon of the Beaver River, a stream which rises from the centre of the Selkirk Range. As the railway rises, all the slopes of the mountains are seen clad with timber, and sawmills are busy. Trestle-bridges span the gaps made by tributary streams, and one of these is two hundred and ninety-six feet high, and four hundred and fifty feet long. The great mountain ranges of the Selkirk passed, the Gold or Coast Range comes next, where the traveller finds himself amongst the better-settled districts of British Columbia.

Kamloops, a place of fifteen years' growth, at the junction of the North and South Thompson Rivers, is a prosperous town, with English residents living in the centre, and the Chinese at either end. Burrard Inlet lies to the north of the Fraser River, and here, at Port Moody, the finished line ends at present. But an extension to Vancouver, at the sea-entrance of Burrard Inlet, is being made, and will be finished next year. There are several settlements on the banks of the Inlet, where timber-mills are at work. One place is an Indian mission settlement, and has three hundred inhabitants.

Vancouver, the western terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, has a very hopeful outlook at present. Being a wooden town, it was

almost entirely burned in June 1886, but is now recovering from that serious fire. Streets are laid out, a substantial wharf has been built, and the trade in town-lots is described as brisk. Much of the cleared surface of the town is covered with stumps of the 'big trees,' spruce, pine, or cedar, which grew there; it costs from one hundred to one hundred and fifty pounds per acre to clear the ground of these stumps. One large pine, standing solitary in the town, was saved on the intercession of the Princess Louise, and has been rightly named after her. The Vancouver chief of police is a gigantic Highlandman, with a force of five men under him. Wood-cutting is the chief industry of this section, and Vancouver as a terminal city has great commercial possibilities.

In conclusion, the *Times* correspondent does not hesitate to confirm the statement, that the Canadian Pacific Railway has 'more good agricultural land, more coal, and more timber, between Winnipeg and the Pacific coast, than all the other Pacific railways combined, and that every part of the line from Montreal to the Pacific will pay.'

WAS IT MURDER?

I HAVE thought it over and over, and cannot come to any definite conclusion. Was I justified in killing the man? If I was, I am a benefactor to some of my fellow-creatures; if I was not, I am a murderer. My readers shall have an opportunity of judging, and I hope their judgment may be lenient.

Some years ago, I was well off, and received the education and bringing-up of a gentleman; but partly through my own folly, and partly through unfortunate speculations, I gradually lost all my capital; and about two years ago I found myself penniless, and saw starvation grinning at me within measurable distance. Then I determined to attempt no longer to keep up appearances, but to try and earn a bare existence in any walk of life that was open to me. After some fruitless efforts and a good deal of the 'hope deferred' which 'maketh the heart sick,' I obtained, through the kindness of a gentleman connected with the Great Junction Railway, the position of stoker. I never was given to drink, so that I was well enough able to fulfil the lowly duties of my position. I am now a station-master; and it is during my few hours of leisure that I prepare this plain narrative for the decision of a discerning public.

It is a great point for a stoker to be on good terms with the engine-driver, and I generally found little trouble in making friends with my nearest travelling companion.

On the day when I went through the most disagreeable experience of my life, I was travelling from Paddington to Cowchester on the well-known—to railway employees—engine named 'Pluto.' She is a fine upstanding, bold sort of engine, and when in good temper, does her work right well. The engine-driver on this occasion was a man named John Morgan. I had not often travelled with him before, only two or three times, and I never could get on comfortably with him. He had been many years in the

Company's service, and bore an excellent character for steadiness, but was considered rather taciturn. He seemed to be always in the sulks, and was, I suppose, of a surly temper. Before we started, he hardly answered any remark I addressed to him, and seemed more surly than usual. Once when I took up a cloth to brighten one of Pluto's taps, he called out to me in a savage tone: 'Let her alone, can't you. I'll make her travel to-day without your bothering.'

I made him no answer, as I did not see the good of having a quarrel in the small space we were confined to. The train was to start at twelve noon, and before that time, we on the engine were all ready; but it was a quarter past twelve before we got the signal to move. There was such a crowd of people of all classes on the platform, that room could hardly be found for them in the train. However, at last the head-guard gave us the signal, and Morgan turned the handle, and we moved slowly and steadily out of the station. When we got well out into the country, Morgan turned to me and said shortly: 'More coal.'

Now, in my opinion, no more coal was wanted, as there was quite enough in the fire to keep up the usual speed. However, as a stoker, I was only an underling, and must obey reasonable orders. So I stoked as bidden, and then curiously watched to see if the engine-driver would turn on full speed. He did nothing of the sort, but sat with his back to the boiler, and began to talk to me quite affably. Amongst other things, he said he was quite tired of this perpetual travelling, and that he meant to look out for a wife with a little money, and never set foot on an engine again. There was nothing at this time peculiar in his manner, except that he was more talkative than usual, and he would now and then turn half-round to the engine and call out: 'Get on, old girl, get on!' We had before us a run of an hour and a half, and by that time we were due at Blinton, a big junction, at which every train must stop; so we had plenty of time to talk.

About an hour after leaving Paddington, Morgan stopped suddenly in the middle of a sentence, and said: 'Well, I must get to work now.' Then he opened the firebox door and called out to me: 'More coal.'

I expostulated with him, and pointed out that we were going at a high rate of speed, and would not need more coal before Blinton; but this seemed to excite him terribly. 'Shovel it in!' he roared, with an oath; 'I'm going to make her travel.'

To pacify him, I took up a shovelful, and managed to upset a good deal of it before I reached the firebox.

'You clumsy fool!' he called out; 'here, give it to me;' and snatching the shovel out of my hands, he crammed on as much coal as he could get in.

I was beginning to get alarmed; and looking out over the well-known country—for I had travelled that journey many and many a time before—I saw that we were much nearer to Blinton than we ought to be at that hour. However, I thought it did not much matter, for the line was signalled clear in front of us, and the damage done was, as yet, simply a little

waste of coal. In a few minutes, our speed increased enormously, and I calculated we were travelling at the rate of seventy miles an hour. I thought it was time to remonstrate; and turning to Morgan, I noticed that the indicator showed full speed. I called his attention to the fact, and begged him to reduce the speed, or we should run into Blinton without being able to stop.

'Ha, ha!' he cried in reply. 'Stop! I'm never going to stop again! I told you I'd make her travel. What do you want to stop for?—Get on, old wench, get on!' Then he burst into a hideous peal of laughter.

A cold sweat of absolute terror broke out on me as I realised the state of things. Here was a raving maniac, a far stronger man than myself, in charge of a train full of people. I bit my lips and clenched my hands, and tried to collect my scattered ideas and decide what was best to be done. Meanwhile, Morgan sat on a rail near the boiler flourishing a shovel and shouting uproariously. The train rushed on with incredible speed, not steadily and evenly, but with leaps and bounds, that threatened to cast the engine off the line at every yard. There was no doubt the man was as mad as a man could be, and he was also master of the situation. I made one effort to reach the handle by which the steam is turned off; but the madman was too sharp for me. 'No, you don't!' he shouted. He brought his shovel down with a tremendous blow on the rail at my side, just missing my head. It was plain I could do nothing by force. Would stratagem be of any use?

I looked out to the country; time was running short; we were not more than twenty miles from Blinton Junction; and if we did not stop there, the whole train must inevitably be wrecked, and probably not one passenger would escape uninjured, and but few with their lives. I looked back to the train. Outside the windows were hands gesticulating, and frightened, alarmed faces. At the end of the train, the guard was waving a red flag. Something must be done, and by me, or we should all be inevitably lost. I made up my mind. I turned to Morgan with a smile on my face, and I said: 'Old boy, you're quite right; this is a fine pace; but it ain't quite fast enough. Look here!' and I caught him by the arm and led him to the side of the engine next to the double rail. 'See!' I cried; 'there is another train coming up faster than us, and she will pass us; we must go faster: but let's see first who is driving her; lean forward and look. Can you see?'

The poor maniac stepped outside the rail and leaned forward to look for the imaginary train, when I gave him a sudden push, and he fell in a heap on the side-rails and was killed on the spot. With a gasp of relief I sprang back to the engine and turned off the steam. It was not a moment too soon. We were well in sight of Blinton Junction before I had the train properly under control. I pulled up at the platform all right, and then I fainted.

When I came to, I was lying on a bench in the waiting-room, and the inspector was standing over me, with his note-book in his hand, prepared to take down my statement. What I stated

was, that the engine-driver had gone mad, and that, to save the lives of the passengers, I had knocked him off the engine just in time to get the train under control before running into the station. This was corroborated by the guard and several passengers; and the case was brought before the solicitors of the Company. I gave my evidence at the inquest, and heard no more of the matter until one day the passenger superintendent handed me ten sovereigns and a letter appointing me station-master at Little Mudford. It was evident the directors condoned my conduct; and I hope that my readers will agree with them, and, in consideration of my having saved a train full of people, will acquit me of murder, and bring in a verdict of 'justifiable homicide.'

POPULAR LEGAL FALLACIES.*

BY AN EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONER.

DEEDS OF GIFT AND WILLS.—II.

THE making of a will is a much less formidable affair than the preparation of a deed of gift. It requires no stamp; the rights of the beneficiaries do not arise until the decease of the testator, and therefore it does not in any way interfere with his power to manage and dispose of his property as he thinks best in the interval during which he retains physical and mental power to make a new will. In a case of extreme simplicity, the testator may even dispense with professional assistance altogether; but this is seldom advisable. As, however, some testators will make their own wills, it may be useful, while adverting to the danger of that practice, to point out how the risk may be lessened. It is always dangerous to use technical expressions—such as 'heirs,' &c.—because a gift to the heirs of a testator has the effect of cutting out the younger children in the same way and to the same extent as if he had died intestate. In some cases, it may even be worse than intestacy, depriving them of their shares of their father's personal estate. The intentions of the testator ought to have the simplest form of expression possible applied to their setting forth in the will. The names of the children who are to benefit ought in most cases to be inserted, this having certain legal advantages in case of death over the description of the children as a class. When property is given to a child of the testator who dies before his father, the gift takes effect as if he had survived his father and then died; while in all other cases, if the beneficiary should die in the lifetime of the testator, the devise or bequest in his favour lapses, or becomes altogether void. Of course this might in any case be provided against by express directions that in case of the death of the beneficiary, the benefit intended for him should go to his children; but such provisions are to some extent inconsistent with that simplicity which is essential in home-made wills.

* It should be understood that this series of articles deals mainly with English as apart from Scotch law.

Other points requiring special attention in some cases are that the subsequent marriage of the parents does not (in England) render bastards legitimate, or capable of taking under the description of 'children' of the testator; and that the marriage of a man with the sister of his deceased wife, or of a woman with the brother of her deceased husband, is absolutely void, and the children of such void marriage are illegitimate. In such cases, the difficulty may be overcome by the use of appropriate words and full and clear descriptions of the persons who are to be included in the will. In many home-made wills, the distinction between the effect of the two disposing words 'devise' and 'bequeath' appears to have been unknown. Now, there is a real distinction here, the former word applying to real estate (land), and the latter to personal estate (money, furniture, &c.); and in cases within our own knowledge, the use of a word which was not appropriate to one class of property, without any sufficient description of what was intended to pass by the will, has occasioned a partial intestacy, and to that extent has defeated the intentions of the testator. The word 'give' is always sufficient, and has the advantage of being safe. A common mistake is the omission of the appointment of executors; and an equal impropriety is the appointment of a tenant for life as sole executor. When everything which the testator possesses is given absolutely to one person, that person may well be appointed sole executor, in order that the power and the beneficial interest may be combined in one and the same person; but if an executor has only a life-interest in the income to arise from the property, some other should be appointed to act with him as joint executors.

The Wills Act, 1837, requires that certain formalities should be observed as to the attestation of wills and codicils. The latter instruments, however, scarcely come within the scope of this, as it is very rare to find a conjunction of circumstances in which it would be advisable for a testator to attempt to alter the effect of the will itself by adding a codicil thereto. Although the Act does not require the adoption of any special form of attestation, still it is very desirable that a well-designed form should be used, because it draws the attention of the parties to the statutory requisites, which cannot be neglected without danger of the will becoming mere waste paper. Such a form is the following, the insertion of which may be allowed to supersede the necessity for a long explanation: 'Signed by the said A. B. C. as his last Will and Testament in the presence of us, present at the same time, who, at his request, in his presence, and in the presence of each other, have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses.' Each witness should sign under this clause, and add his address and occupation. Formerly, if any witness had any interest in the will, the effect was to render the will void; but the inconvenience of this led to an alteration of the law, whereby in case of a beneficiary—or the wife or husband of a beneficiary—being one of the attesting witnesses, the will remains valid, except that the witness

cannot take any benefit thereunder; nor can the husband or wife of such witness.

Much misapprehension exists as to the effect of the marriage of a testator on a will previously executed by him. It is generally known that a will may be revoked by the making of a subsequent will; whether the revocation be express—which it ought always to be—or merely by necessary implication, the new will being inconsistent with the old one, and not merely a codicil which is intended to be supplementary thereto. But it is very difficult to persuade some people that *when a man gets married, he ought to make a new will*, the marriage operating as a revocation of the former will. There is no need to insist to any great extent upon the fairness of this rule of law, for it scarcely requires a moment's consideration to see that a will which would be quite proper for a bachelor, would be altogether unsuitable for the altered status of the same man when, by his marriage, he had taken upon him new duties and responsibilities. Few men would be so cruel as to wish their wills to remain unaltered when their position had so materially changed. Sometimes mischief is done by over-anxiety to provide for an intended wife; a man makes a will before his marriage, in order that his intended wife may be provided for in the event of his decease before marriage; and in ignorance of the rule of law as to revocation, he neglects to have his will re-copied, and then to re-sign it, and have the new will duly attested after the nuptial ceremony has been performed; in consequence of which neglect or omission, he ultimately dies intestate; and his wife only becomes entitled to the provision made for her by the law, although her husband intended her to have a much larger share of his estate. It is only requisite for this peculiarity to be known in order that the remedy, which is so easy, may be applied.

As to the revocation of a will by destruction, the legal distinctions often give rise to questions as difficult of solution as any which affect the original validity of wills. A testator who is of sound and disposing mind may cancel or revoke a will which he has previously made, without making another will to supersede it; and the usual mode of effecting this object is by the destruction of the will with the intention of revoking it. Here, however, all the necessary conditions must exist, or the will would not be revoked; and even if it were destroyed so utterly that its contents were undecipherable, and so destroyed by the testator himself, yet, if he did not intend to revoke the will, or was mentally incapable of disposing of his property, if the contents of the will could be proved in some other way, as from a draft or copy, probate would be granted of such draft or copy, although the expense of proving the will in that indirect manner would be considerably more than an ordinary grant of probate would cost. A very curious case was before the court some time since. A married man who had made his will in favour of his wife, in a moment of passion arising from his displeasure at something which she had done—nothing of any importance—tore up his will and threw the pieces at her before leaving the room where the quarrel had occurred. She was a wise woman, for she

gathered the fragments together and said no more on the subject until after her husband's decease, when probate was granted of the pieces, the court being of opinion that the deceased had not seriously intended to revoke his will, but had simply torn it when irritated to the verge of madness; and in this view the fact of his not having made a subsequent will was an important consideration.

The following brief observations as to the capacity of testators must bring us to the end of our present subject. A married woman who possesses any separate estate may dispose of it by will or otherwise as if she were single. An infant cannot make a valid will, nor can a person of unsound mind. But there are many cases in which a person may be capable of transacting all ordinary business, and yet be so much under the influence of some other person that his will may be set aside in consequence of the undue influence which has been brought to bear upon him. It is impracticable for us to enter at any length upon this part of the subject, as we have already trespassed by exceeding the space allotted to us. The simple rule is, that the will must be—as its name implies—an expression of the unbiased will and mind of the testator. Whenever the validity of the will of any deceased person is disputed on any ground, the due execution and attestation thereof have to be proved in court; but in ordinary cases the witnesses are not called upon when the will is proved, unless there is some irregularity or incompleteness in the attestation clause, or some erasure or interlineation in the will.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

'ATLANTIC GREYHOUNDS.'

THE wonderful results achieved by the great Atlantic liners are only stimulating men's minds as to how the voyage may be still further accelerated. There are torpedo boats that can steam at the rate of twenty-two knots an hour, and enthusiasts now deem it possible to build passenger vessels which would double that speed. Professor Thurston proposes a steamer eight hundred feet in length, eighty feet beam, and twenty-five feet draught of water, as the best form yet known for quick sailing. The fast ships of to-day exert about one and a half horse-power per ton to reach a speed of twenty sea-miles per hour; but he anticipates some slight improvements which would reduce this figure. Though his leviathan may be expected to demand thirty-five thousand horse-power to make twenty knots an hour, he aspires to forty, and at this speed the horse-power required would probably amount to nearly two hundred and fifty thousand. The question is, whether the time saved would compensate for the expenditure of so much extra fuel. It appears that a vessel having a displacement of ten thousand nine hundred and sixty tons, and an indicated horse-power of ten thousand three hundred, consumes two hundred and five tons of coal per day; while a smaller vessel, having only nine thousand eight hundred and sixty tons displacement, and fourteen thousand three hundred and twenty-one indicated horse-power, consumes three hundred and fifteen tons

of coal per day, and yet the larger vessel has accomplished the passage in about eighteen hours longer than the smaller, and burned about six hundred tons of coal less. The present difficulty of naval architects is how to give greater speed with a low consumption of coal and the same carrying capacity. If passenger vessels relied solely on passengers, quicker voyages would be at once possible. However, there seems a growing tendency towards divorcing goods from passenger traffic, as railways have already done. Then light, yacht-like vessels of modern size would, for speed, safety, and economy, probably meet all the requirements of the passenger traffic. A high rate of speed, it may be presumed, will not be overlooked, whatever else. Some sanguine people believe that less than forty years will suffice to reduce the seven days of an Atlantic trip to three and a half, and Professor Thurston mentions about eighty hours. There are several arguments which point to the possibility of a great reduction. If we go back forty-one years, the *Great Britain* made the passage from Liverpool to New York in a little less than fifteen days, and though this was considered good, in 1874 the *Britannic* and *Germanic* placed Queenstown and New York within eight and a half days' sail of each other. The *Etruria* and *Umbria* have since made the voyage in six days six hours. Again, of the seven vessels engaged in the transatlantic trade which have made the passage in seven days or under, not one has been fitted with those latest aids to economy, triple expansion engines and forced draught. As a matter of fact, there is enormous waste; and an authority estimates that only one half of the total power exerted by the engines is effective in propelling the vessel. In addition to this, a very considerable portion of the heat energy of the fuel escapes through the funnel, instead of producing steam. Something might be done here towards securing greater economy; and by using high-pressure boilers and triple expansion engines, there is said to be a saving of as much as sixteen per cent. One thing seems to be pretty clear, that the fast steamers of the future will owe their speed to the engineer more than to the naval architect. The lines upon which modern racers are built are scarcely likely to be much improved. When the engineer gets the space at present devoted to cargo, for engines, boilers, and fuel, swiftness will ensue, but at a greater cost, as a matter of course, as may be gathered from the fact that on the Atlantic voyage a gain of eighteen hours between two ships, in all respects equal, necessitates an expenditure of five hundred tons of coal extra. As, however, we have already predicted in these pages, oil may yet take the place of the bulky and unwieldy coal.

'ARMY PANICS.'

With reference to the article which appeared in a recent number of this *Journal* (No. 144), a Forfarshire parish minister sends us an incident copied from the diary of his father, who was in the 92d Highland Regiment, and which incident bears some likeness to that quoted from Napier's *Peninsular War* in the article above referred to. The 92d formed part of Lord Hill's division, which seems to have included also the 24th, the

50th, and 71st regiments, and a regiment of Guards. The incident is told as follows:

'Our division marched to a place within five leagues of Madrid, called Aranjuez, where the king of Spain has a grand palace on the banks of the Tagus. At this time, Lord Wellington was closely investing Burgos; but the French, bringing a large army into the country, forced him to raise the siege, and the whole of the English, Portuguese, and Spanish troops had to fall back upon the frontiers of Portugal. Our division, under Lord Hill, coming past Madrid in the course of our retreat, had to cross a large bridge at midnight. It was then that a very extraordinary thing occurred. In a moment and without any cause for it whatever, all the troops were struck with a panic and driven into great confusion. Some were thrown on their backs, and others had their legs almost broken. Bonnets flew one way, and muskets another. This unaccountable panic extended to the rear of the whole division. A regiment that was lying asleep by the roadside was roused and thrown into confusion at the same instant. It so happened that next day the French came up to the bridge and a sharp contest took place. Our artillery was at one end of the bridge, and the French at the other. There was a very sharp fire on both sides with field-pieces and small-arms.'

THE TWO SEAS.

'When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee.'

EACH night we are launched on a sea of sleep;
No doubts disturb us, no fears annoy.
Though we plough the waves of the darkened deep,
We know we are safe in the Master's keep,
And the morning brings us joy.

What dread, then, should daunt us, what doubt distress,
When on Death's dark sea we are launched alone?
In that deeper sleep, should we trust Him less?
Shall we limit to earth His power to bless?
Will the Father forsake his own?

He made us His children; He bears us to bed;
And whether our sleep be the first or last,
What matters it where our souls are led,
If our trust in the God of the living and dead
Should only hold us fast?

J. B. S.

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